

IN THE CLAIMS

The following is a complete listing of the claims. This listing replaces all earlier versions and listings of the claims.

Claim 1 (currently amended): An image reading apparatus connected to a plurality of image forming apparatuses and transmitting an image signal representing an image to one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses, said image reading apparatus comprising:

a selection means for selecting and connecting one of [[a]] the plurality of image forming apparatuses;

[[first]] determination means for determining whether or not the selected image forming apparatus requests input of management information input of relating to a user is to be requested of the user, based on information received from the selected image forming apparatus;

input means for inputting the management information in accordance with a result of the determination by said determination means and transmitting the input management information to the selected image forming apparatus, in accordance with a determination of said first determination means;

transmitting means for transmitting the inputted management information to the selected image forming apparatus;

second determination means for determining information relating to permission/prohibition of image reading of an image of an original transmitted from the selected image forming apparatus, in accordance with the input and transmitted management information reception means for receiving a result from the selected image forming apparatus of a

determination by the selected image forming apparatus authenticating the management information; and

image reading control means for reading the controlling reading of the image and transmission of image of the original, based on a determination of said second determination means, and for transmitting an the image signal representing the read image to the selected image forming apparatus, in accordance with the received result of the determination from the selected image forming apparatus.

a.

Claim 2 (currently amended): An image reading apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said image reading control means compresses the image signal and then transmits prior to transmitting the compressed image signal.

Claims 3-5 (canceled)

Claim 6 (currently amended): An image reading method for controlling an image reading apparatus connected to a plurality of image forming apparatuses and transmitting an image signal representing an image to one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses, said image reading method comprising the steps of:

a selection procedure for selecting and connecting one of [[a]] the plurality of image forming apparatuses;

a first determination procedure for determining whether or not the selected image forming apparatus requests input of management information relating to a user is

to be requested of the user based on information received from the selected image forming apparatus;

an input procedure for inputting the management information in accordance with a result of the determination in said determining step; [[and]] transmitting the [[input]] inputted management information to the selected image forming apparatus in accordance with a determination in said first determination procedure;

a second determination procedure for determining information relating to permission/prohibition of image reading of an image of an original transmitted from the selected image forming apparatus in accordance with the input and transmitted management information receiving a result from the selected image forming apparatus of a determination by the selected image forming apparatus authenticating the management information; and
an image reading procedure for reading controlling reading of the image of the original, based on a determination in said the second determination procedure; and for transmitting an transmission of the image signal representing the read image to the selected image forming apparatus, in accordance with the received result of the determination from the selected image forming apparatus.

Claim 7 (currently amended): An image reading method according to Claim 6, wherein said image reading procedure comprises a procedure for control step includes compressing the image signal and then prior to transmitting the compressed image signal.

Claims 8-14 (canceled)

Claim 15 (currently amended): A computer readable memory storing a program executing an image reading method for controlling an image reading apparatus connected to a plurality of image forming apparatuses and transmitting an image signal representing an image to one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses, [[the]] said program comprising:

program codes for a selection process code for selecting and connecting

Q one of [[a]] the plurality of image forming apparatuses;

program codes for a first determination process code for determining whether or not the selected image forming apparatus requests input of management information relating to a user ~~is to be requested of the user, based on information received from the selected image forming apparatus;~~

program codes for an input process code for inputting the management information in accordance with a result of the determination by said determination code; [[and]] code for transmitting the [[input]] inputted management information to the selected image forming apparatus in accordance with a determination in the first determination process;

program codes for a second determination process for determining information relating to permission/prohibition of image reading of an image of an original transmitted from the selected image forming apparatus, in accordance with the input and transmitted management information code for receiving a result from the selected image forming apparatus of a determination by the selected image forming apparatus authenticating the management information; and

~~program codes for an image reading process for reading code for controlling reading of the image of the original based on a determination in the second determination process, and for transmitting an and transmission of the image signal representing the read image to the selected image forming apparatus, in accordance with the received result of the determination from the selected image forming apparatus.~~

A Claim 16 (currently amended): A computer readable memory according to Claim 15, wherein ~~the image reading process~~ said control code compresses the image signal and then transmits prior to transmitting the compressed image signal.

Claims 17-25 (canceled)

Claim 26 (new): An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the selected image forming apparatus performs printing based on the received image signal.

Claim 27 (new): An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the management information includes at least a user ID, a division ID, or a title ID for the authentication determination at the selected image forming apparatus.

Claim 28 (new): An image processing apparatus connected to an image reading apparatus for receiving an image signal representing an image from the image reading apparatus, said apparatus comprising:

determination means for determining whether or not management information relating to a user is required from the image reading apparatus; transmission means for transmitting a result of the determination by said determination means to the image reading apparatus; reception means for receiving management information from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the result of the determination by said determination means;

A authentication determination means for authenticating the received management information; and image processing means for receiving and processing the image signal representing the image from the image reading apparatus, in accordance with the result of the authentication determination performed by said authentication determination means.

Claim 29 (new): An apparatus according to Claim 28, wherein said image processing means performs printing based on the received image signal.

Claim 30 (new): An apparatus according to Claim 28, wherein the image signal is a compressed image signal, and wherein said image processing means performs expansion processing of the compressed image signal.

Claim 31 (new): An image processing method for controlling an image processing apparatus connected to an image reading apparatus for receiving an image signal representing an image from the image reading apparatus, said method comprising:

determining whether or not management information relating to a user is required from the image reading apparatus;

transmitting a result of the determination in said determining step to the image reading apparatus;

receiving management information from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the result of the determination in said determining step;

authenticating the received management information; and

Q₁ receiving and processing the image signal representing the image from the image reading apparatus, in accordance with the result of the authentication determination performed in said authentication step.

Claim 32 (new): A computer readable memory storing a program executing an image processing method for controlling an image processing apparatus connected to an image reading apparatus for receiving an image signal representing an image from the image reading device, said program comprising:

code for determining whether or not management information relating to a user is required from the image reading apparatus;

code for transmitting a result of the determination by said determining code to the image reading apparatus;

code for receiving management information from the image reading apparatus in accordance with the result of the determination by said determining code;

code for authenticating the received management information; and

code for receiving and processing the image signal representing the image from the image reading apparatus, in accordance with the result of the authentication determination performed by said authentication code.

Claim 33 (new): An image processing system including an image reading apparatus and a plurality of image forming apparatuses for processing an image signal representing an image, wherein the image reading apparatus is connected to the plurality of image forming apparatuses, said system comprising:

selection means for selecting one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses;

determination means for determining whether or not the selected image forming apparatuses requests input of management information relating to a user;

input means, at the image reading apparatus, for inputting the management information in accordance with a result of the determination by said determination means;

authentication determination means for authenticating the inputted management information;

control means for controlling reading of the image in accordance with a result of the determination by said authentication determination means; and

image processing means, at each image forming apparatus, for processing the image signal representing the image.